

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-43. (Canceled)

44. (New) A method, in a contact centre comprising a central server for distributing work items to workstations of a first set of resources, and a work queue having a plurality of work items, the method comprising:

receiving the plurality of work items at at least one telecommunications component of the contact centre from a plurality of customers;

generating, in a workload monitoring agent, based at least in part on said work queue, an ordered set of items related to the plurality of work items in the work queue;

analysing by said workload monitoring agent said ordered set;

based on said analysing step, determining in said workload monitoring agent a state of said work queue;

forwarding work items in the work queue to workstations of the first set of resources; and
if the workload monitoring agent predicts a surplus of work items, additionally forwarding work items to workstations of a second set of resources.

45. (New) The method of claim 44, wherein the workstations of the first set of resources service the work items forwarded thereto and the workstations of the second set of resources service the work items forwarded thereto.

46. (New) The method of claim 44, wherein if the state indicating a surplus of work items being predicted is a future risk state, the method further includes predicting when the surplus of work items will occur, and additionally forwarding work items in the work queue to workstations of the second set of resources in dependence on said prediction.

47. (New) The method of claim 44, further comprising:

as a part of the generating an ordered set of items, determining a required queue position, RQP, for each work item in said work queue, said RQP based on a service time goal for each work item and a weighted advance time of the work queue.

48. (New) The method of claim 47, wherein said generating step includes:
creating an array of counters, each element in said array of counters corresponding to a predefined range of RQP's; and
incrementing a counter in said array of counters associated with the RQP for each work item; and wherein said determining step includes:

for each work item, subtracting from the service time goal for said work item an amount of time since said work item was received to obtain a remaining time for said work item.

49. (New) The method of claim 47, wherein said determining step includes:
determining said weighted advance time of the work queue; and
for each work item, dividing said remaining time by said weighted advance time for the work queue.

50. (New) The method of claim 47, wherein said generating step further comprises:
determining a range of RQP's which correspond to each item within said ordered set, wherein, when a number of a selected item is N, said predefined range of queue positions for the selected item in said ordered set, is $2^{N-1} < \text{RQP} \leq 2^N$.

51. (New) The method of claim 44, wherein said analysing step comprises:
creating an index variable;
setting the index variable to one;
creating a sum variable;
setting said sum variable to zero;
calculating a new sum as the sum of the previous value of the sum variable and the value of the item in the ordered set which corresponds to the index variable;
determining a highest required queue position, RQP, associated with the item in the ordered set which corresponds to the index variable;
determining if the sum is greater than said highest RQP;
setting a state to "Future Risk" when said sum is greater than said highest RQP; and
incrementing said index and repeating said calculating a new sum, determining a highest RQP, determining if the sum is greater than the highest RQP, and setting a state steps when said sum is not greater than said highest RQP.

52. (New) The method of claim 51 wherein said analysing step further comprises:
determining if there are additional items in said ordered set;
setting a state to “On Target” when there are no additional items in said ordered set; and
when said sum is greater than said highest RQP, predicting a time and/or extent of said
“Future Risk”.

53. (New) The method of claim 52 wherein said time is calculated as the product of
the index and the weighted advance time for the work queue and wherein said extent is
calculated as the difference between said sum and said highest RQP.

54. (New) A computer-readable medium containing executable instructions for
performing the method of claim 44.

55. (New) A contact centre for servicing a plurality of work items, comprising a
plurality of workstations corresponding to a first set of resources, a central server in
communication with the plurality of workstations, wherein the central server comprises at least
one work queue of work items, wherein:

the contact centre comprises means for receiving the plurality of work items from a
plurality of customers; and

said central server further comprises a means for generating, based at least in part on said
work queue, an ordered set of items related to the plurality of work items in the work queue;
means for analysing said ordered set; means for determining a state of said work queue based on
said analysis, means for forwarding work items in the work queue to workstations of the first set
of resources, and if the state corresponds to a predicted surplus of work items, additionally
forwarding work items to workstations of a second set of resources.

56. (New) The contact centre of claim 55, wherein each of said work items has an
associated service time goal, said central server being further adapted to:

(a) monitor said at least one queue of work items;

(b) assess a state of said at least one queue of work items with respect to the service time
goals for said plurality of work items;

(c) determine a number of work items which are likely not to meet their service time
goals and a time at which the service time goal for said number of work items will expire; and

(d) in response to determining a number of work items are likely not to meet their service time goals, assign at least one resource from the second set of resources to at least one of said work items.

57. (New) The contact centre of claim 55, wherein the central server further comprises means for monitoring agent workload being operable to (i) identify a weighted advance time for servicing of work items, (ii) determine a required queue position for each of said work items, (iii) determine said required queue position based on the weighted advance time for servicing of work items, an elapsed time since the work item was received at said at least one queue, and a service time goal for the work items, and (iv) determine, from the at least one queue, a representation of required queue positions associated with the work items in said at least one queue.

58. (New) The contact centre of claim 55, wherein said required queue position is calculated as the difference between the service time goal and the elapsed time divided by the weighted advance time for servicing of work items.

59. (New) The contact centre of claim 55, wherein a predetermined workload level exists when a queue position in the representation of required queue positions is less than a number of enqueued work items ahead of the queue position in the representation of required queue positions, wherein the time at which the predetermined workload level will likely exist is the product of the weighted advance time for servicing of work items and queue position at which the predetermined workload level will likely exist; and wherein the number of work items required to be serviced is the difference between the required queue position and the number of enqueued work items before the required queue position.

60. (New) The contact centre of claim 55, wherein the workstations of the first set of resources service the work items forwarded thereto and the workstations of the second set of resources service the work items forwarded thereto.